

temples ; and as each king is interred at the village where he was born and where his afterbirth is buried, these grave-shrines are scattered over the country. Each of them usually comprises a small group of round huts, resembling the common houses of the people, the whole being enclosed by a fence ; one of the huts is built over the grave, the others are occupied by the guardians of the shrine, who at first are generally the widows or old men-servants of the deceased king. When these women or retainers die, they are succeeded in office by their descendants, for the tombs are maintained in perpetuity, so that the number of temples and of gods is always on the Increase. Cattle are s. dedicated to these royal shrines and animals sacrificed at them. For example, when the millet crop threatens to fail or a murrain breaks out among the beasts, one of the dead kings will appear to somebody in a dream and demand a sacrifice. The dream is reported to the king, and he immediately orders a bullock and a cow to be sent to the grave of the dead king who appeared in a vision of the night to the sleeper. This is done ; the bullock is killed and the cow added to the sacred herd of the shrine. It is customary, also, though not necessary, at harvest to offer some of the new millet at the temple-tombs of the kings ; and sick people send animals to be sacrificed there on their behalf. Special regard is paid to trees that grow near the graves of the kings ; and the spirits of the departed monarchs are believed to appear from time to time in the form of certain animals. One of them, for example, always

takes the shape of a certain insect, which seems to be the larva of the *Mantidae*. When a Shilluk finds one of these insects, he will take it up in his hands and deposit it reverentially at the shrine. Other kings manifest themselves as a certain species of white birds; others assume the form of giraffes. When one of these long-legged and long-necked creatures comes stalking up fearlessly to a village where there is a king's grave, the people know that the king's soul is in the animal, and the attendants at the royal tomb testify their joy at the appearance of their master by sacrificing a sheep or even a bullock.

But of all the dead kings none is revered so deeply or